# An Analysis of Interlingual and Intralingual Errors in EFL Learners' Composition

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## Abstract

This study aims to investigate the occurrence of errors committed by EFL learners in their composition in terms of interlingual and intralingual errors. The setting of the study was a state Islamic university in Banjarmasin South Kalimantan, Indonesia. The research participants were undergraduate students majoring in English Education. Data were collected through documentation of students' composition and analyzed based on Corder's Error Analysis (EA) theory. From the samples of 38 compositions submitted, it was identified that interlingual errors occurred more frequently than intralingual errors. Interlingual errors comprised morphological selection, lexical selection, syntactical selection, and misordering. Meanwhile, intralingual errors were evident in both omission and addition in the areas of word formation and syntax. The findings of this study revealed that first language interference caused more errors in writing than learners' incomplete process of acquiring second language rules. To prevent the errors from being fossilized, it is suggested that in the teaching and learning process, language instructors provide continuous corrective feedback, and learners be more active in finding exposure to the correct form of the target language.

**Keywords:** error, interlingual, intralingual, composition

## Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki terjadinya kesalahan yang dilakukan oleh pembelajar bahasa asing dalam tulisan mereka yang berupa kesalahan interlingual dan intralingual. Penelitian dilakukan di sebuah universitas Islam negeri di Banjarmasin Kalimantan Selatan Indonesia. Partisipan penelitian adalah mahasiswa S1 jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. Data diperoleh melalui dokumentasi hasil karangan mahasiswa yang kemudian dianalisa berdasarkan teori Error Analysis dari Corder. Sebanyak 38 sampel karangan mahasiswa dikumpulkan dan ditemukan bahwa kesalahan interlingual lebih banyak terjadi daripada kesalahan intralingual. Kesalahan interlingual berupa kesalahan dalam memilih kosa kata dan menyusun kalimat yang disebabkan oleh pengaruh bahasa asli. Sedangkan kesalahan intralingual berupa penghilangan atau penambahan yang tidak tepat pada bentuk kata atau bentuk kalimat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengaruh bahasa asli yang menyebabkan kesalahan interlingual dalam tulisan terjadi lebih banyak daripada kesalahan intralingual. Untuk mencegah melekatnya kesalahan, disarankan agar dalam proses belajar mengajar guru dapat terus memberikan umpan balik, dan siswa harus lebih aktif dalam mencari contoh-contoh bentuk bahasa yang benar.

**Kata Kunci:** kesalahan, interlingual, intralingual, karangan

## Introduction

In second language learning, writing often assumed as the most challenging skill to acquire compared to other skills such as listening, speaking, and reading. It is primarily due to the fact that writing requires a cognitive process which includes thinking ability and verbal command [1]. L2 learners have to struggle to construct a written text since they have to consider multiple writing aspects not

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[1] (Nunan, 1989 in Fareed, Ashraf, & Bilal, 2016)

only in generating ideas but also in expressing ideas by using the correct forms of the target language such as vocabulary, syntax, cohesive devices, and writing mechanics.

In expanding circle countries where English is learned as a foreign language, EFL learners are considered weak in terms of writing skill. Even in a country like Pakistan where there has been a significant increase of English language users, the writing skills of the students are still below standard [2]. A number of factors affecting learners in the process of learning to write include learner motivation, teacher competence, and pedagogical approach. Classroom environment is also perceived as influential to learners' ability and their willingness to complete a writing task [3].

Furthermore, Fareed et al [4] contend that poor writing skill has generated from learners' academic skills such as lack of reading and practice. When learners do not possess knowledge on particular topic - which should be obtained from reading they cannot write well. Also, when they lack of knowledge about target language norms, learners are likely to produce a writing piece containing errors.

To see how errors are committed by EFL learners is an interesting area of investigation. Numerous studies on EFL learners' writing errors have been conducted in non-English speaking countries. For instance, a study of undergraduate students of a university in Indonesia showed that in terms of grammatical errors, the types of errors found in their writing are word choice, the use of verbs, articles, prepositions, plural forms, and spelling [5]. Similarly, a study conducted at a university in Jordan revealed that EFL learners made errors in word order, subject-

verb agreement, spelling, and improper use of articles in their composition [6].

[7] conducted a research on Libyan students who took postgraduate program at public and private universities in Malaysia, and found that in the students' essay writing consisted semantic errors which were mostly caused by direct translation from L1. Another study using a mixed-method approach at two language institutes in Iran proved that the most occurring error commited by the learners is morphosyntactic errors, followed by orthographic, lexicosemantic, and phonological errors [8].

In an attempt to analyze EFL learners' writing errors in a different setting and a broader scope, that is, from both interlingual and intralingual aspects, the present study was conducted. The study took place at an English Education Deparment of a state Islamic university in Banjarmasin, Indonesia. The theoritical framework underpinning this study is Corder's Error Analysis (EA) Theory. The aims of the study were 1) to examine interlingual errors in EFL learners' compositions; 2) to examine intralingual errors in their compositions; and 3) to identify the category of errors which frequently occured in EFL learners' composition.

## Literature Review

A number of theories have been developed in analyzing language errors. The famous one is Selinker's theory which is based on interlanguage system. He suggests that there are five factors which cause errors learning second language. Those factors are overgeneralization, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication and language transfer [9].

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[2] Fareed, Ashraf, and Bilal.

[3] Indah Rahmalia, 'Students' Perception of Classroom Environment of Writing Class', *Jurnal Educative: Journal of Educational Studies*, 1.1 (2016), 27–34.

[4] (2016)

[5] Hamzah, 'An Analysis of the Written Grammatical Errors Produced By Freshmen Students in English Writing', *Lingua Didaktika*, 6.1 (2012), 17–25 <https://doi.org/10.24036/ld.v6i1.3127>.

[6] (Al-Khasawneh, 2014)

[7] Ugab, Darus, & Aladdin (2016)

[8] Mitra Bahrpeyma and Omid Ostad, 'Error Analysis of Composition Writing: A Case of Iranian EFL Learners', *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, 7.1 (2018), 101–12.

[9] Larry Selinker, *Rediscovering Interlanguage* (London: Longman, 1992).

Error Analysis (EA) Theory was established by Stephen Corder in 1970s and has become one of the popular approaches in analyzing errors in second language learning [10]. As one of the most critical theories of second language acquisition, EA deals with analyzing the errors made by second language learners through comparing the learners' acquired norms with the target language norms, and explaining the identified errors (James, 1998 in [11]. In addition, error analysis is "the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes, and consequences of unsuccessful language" (James, 1998 in [12].

Prominent scholars in language teaching and learning have several definitons of error analysis. According to Crystal (1999 in [13], error analysis (EA) is "the study of the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a language, especially a foreign language" (p.108). Meanwhile, James (2001 in [14] defines EA as "the study of linguistic ignorance, the investigation of what people do not know and how they attempt to cope with their ignorance" (p.62).

Corder (1973 in [15] classifies EFL learners' errors in terms of the differences between their utterance and the reconstructed version. Based on this, he classifies errors into four categories: omission, selection, addition, or misordering of some element. According to [16], this kind of classification can help the teacher diagnose learners' problem in constructing utterances or sentences, thus can find a way to provide feedback. The four categories of errors are explained in the following part.

The first category of error, *omission*, occurs when learners leave required item in a sentence they construct. For example, they write "a strange thing happen to me yesterday". The omission of 's' in the word 'happen' is called morphological omission. At syntactical level, omission occurs when learners leave out a subject or a predicate in a sentence, for instance "must say also their names? "

The second category of error, *addition*, is the opposite of omission, when learners add unnecessary item, either letters or affixes in morphological addition, and words in syntactical addition. "The books is here" is an example of morphological addition, while "I stayed there during five years ago' is the example of syntactical addition.

*Selection*, the third category of errors, occurs when learners use the wrong form of word (morphological selection) such as in the sentence "My friend is oldest than me". When learners apply wrong sentence construction such as in the sentence "I want that my friend comes here", it is called syntactical selection. Errors in lexical selection occurs when learners use the vocabulary which is inapproapriate to the context or uncommon to standard English.

The last category of errors is *misordering*, that is, placing the word in a wrong order, for instance 'key car' (lexical misordering), "getting upping (morphological misordering), and "he is a dear to me friend" (syntactical misordering).

Apart from the above category, errors can also be distinguished into local and global error [17]. Local error is more acceptable and considered as a minor error since it does not hinder the intended meaning and still comprehensible to the reader, for instance "If I hear from her, I would let you know". Meanwhile, global error a major type of error as it prevents the understanding of the intended meaning, such as in "I like bus but my mother said so not that we must be late for school".

Errors in learners' language production is closely related to language acquisition [18].

[10] (Al-Khresheh, 2016)

[11] Bahrpeyma & Ostad, 2017)

[12] Al-Khresheh, 2016)

[13] Bahrpeyma & Ostad, 2018)

[14] Bahrpeyma and Ostad.

[15] Al-Khresheh, 2016)

[16] Ellis (1997)

[17] V Erdogan, 'Contribution of Error Analysis to Foreign Language Teaching', *Mersin University Journal of the Faculty of Education*, 1.2 (2005), 261–70.

[18] Rod Ellis, *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Two linguistic factors which are considered the major sources of errors are interlingual and intralingual interference [19]; James, 1996 & Richard, 1974 in [20].

Interlingual errors, often named transfer errors, are those attributed to the first language (L1). These errors interfere with or prevent the language learner from, to some extent, acquiring the patterns and rules of the target language (Corder, 1973 in [21]. Generally, L2 learners commit interlingual errors because they use their L1 as a tool to learn L2. They transfer some structures form their L1 to produce their L2. In second language witing, learners made errors because they are unable to separate L1 from L2, and rely on word per word translation of L1 structure (Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 1982 in [22]. However, in EA theory, interlingual erros is not regarded as the result of old habit, but rather as a sign that the learner is in the process of internalizing the new system of the target language [23].

Meanwhile, intralingual, or often called as developmental errors, are due to the target language (L2) or the language being learned. Intralingual errors encompass these aspects: overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false concept of hypothesis of some grammatical rules [24]. In similar manner, Keshavarz (2013 in [25], described the causes of intralingual errors as over-generalizations (errors caused by extending target language rules to inappropriate contexts), simplifications (errors that result from learners producing simpler linguistic rules than those which exist in the target language), developmental errors (those which reflect natural developmental stages), communication-based errors (errors that result from communication strategies), induced errors (those resulting from transfer of training), errors of avoidance (which result

from failing to use certain target language structures because they are considered to be too difficult), or errors of overproduction (which refer to structures that are used too frequently).

[26] claims that analyzing learners language errors is essential for both teachers and learners. From learner's errors, teachers can reflect on whether their teaching has brought impact to the students and whether students have made progress or not. In part of learners, error can be used as a tool to learn about the language and improve their language performance. Through EA, a reinforcement in certain language area can be made possible during teaching and learning acitivity.

## Research Methodology

This study adopted qualitative approach to explore the errors made by EFL learners in their composition. The qualitative approach enables the researcher to analyze data in depth [27] [28] particularly since this study involved written texts as a primary source of data.

The participants of the study were the undergraduate students majoring in Englsih Education of an Islamic state university in Banjarmasin South Kalimantan, Indonesia. These students attended compulsory course Paragraph Writing and Essay Writing in their second year of study. Paragraph Writing course was offered in the third semester, while Essay Writing was in the fourth semester. The students' level of language proficiency ranges from pre-intermediate to intermediate level. There were four classes and each class met once a week for the period of 14 weeks with weekly writing assignment. The population of the students is displayed in the following table:

**Table 1. Students' Population in Paragraph Writing Course**

| No | Class | Number of students |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | A | 31 |
| 2. | B | 34 |

[19] (Brown, 2000

[20] Al-Khresheh, 2016)

[21] Al-Khresheh, 2016)

[22] Al-Khresheh, 2016)

[23] Erdogan.

[24] Al-Khresheh.

[25] Bahrpeyma & Ostad, 2018)

[26] Corder (1981)

[27] (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007;

[28] Creswell, 2008)

| 3. | C | 33 |
|----|------|-----|
| 4. | D | 32 |
|    | Total | 130 |

During the first five weeks these students were given lectures and tutorials about writing convention and techniques, and practiced pre-writing, organizing, writing topic sentence, outlining, developing ideas, identifying unity and coherence, applying language features, revising and editing. Starting the seventh week, the students were introduced to different types of paragraph, such as descriptive paragraph, how-to paragraph, classification paragraph, definition paragraph, compare-contrast paragraph, cause-effect paragraph, and argumentative paragraph. Each week they were assigned to write a type of paragraph on some given topics.

Prior to writing the paragraph, the students were given some time to do pre-writing activity such as brainstorming, outlining and writing a topic sentence. The completed paragraphs were then submitted to Google Classroom, the online platform that the instructor has chosen to display the students' compositions.

Due to a large number of compositions submitted, I limited the samples of this research by deliberately selecting the assignment submitted in the tenth week, that is, classification paragraph. For the assignment, the students were asked to work in pairs, and write a classification paragraph. The topics given were types of friends, types of teachers/lecturers, types of music, and types of campus organizations.

The sample selection was based on qualitative sampling technique suggested by[29], that is, purposeful sampling. He argued that "there are no rules for sampling size in qualitative inquiry" (p. 244), and the sample size would very much depend on the researcher's rationale and purpose. In this study, the total compositions submitted by the

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[29] Patton (2002)

students for classification paragraph were 55, and 38 paragraphs were selected as the samples. This samples size was believed to adequately represent the other similar paragraphs submitted in the assignment.

Theoretical framework underpinning data analysis was Corder's [30] and Ellis's[31] stages of error analysis which consist of: (1). Collection of samples of learner language errors; (2). Identification of errors; (3). Description of errors; (4). Explanation of errors

The first stage of data collection was conducted by selecting the students' compostions under the category which has been described above. After the samples were coleected, the errors were identified manually by highlighting part of the paragraphs. Based on EA theory, description of error is the stage where the identified errors are counted and categorized, whereas explanation of errors is the stage where the nature of errors is explained based on particular factor, either interlingual or intralingual.

## Finding and Discussion

Findings of this research are firstly categorized into four major areas of errors based in Corder's EA theory. Those errors are omission, addition, selection, and misordering. Each category is then analyzed in terms of interlingual and intralingual errors.

### Omission

Omission identified in the students' compositions varied from morphological mission to syntactical omission. Overall, from 38 sample paragraphs, 25 morphological omissions and 28 syntactical omissions have been identified. The following table presents examples of errors in omission extracted from the students' paragraphs.

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[30] (1981)

[31] (1994)

**Table 2. Some Examples of Omission Error**

| Error category | Error identification |
|---|---|
| Morphological omission | The melody of some musical instrument. it really make my mood better specially if they play the song it is sooting when we hearing that flow jazz song This is music that comfort me |
| Syntactical omission | They more than friends for me curious with this song Rock music is a broad genre of popular music that originated as "rock and roll" in the United States popular music that can easily accepted in all circles I like this type of music because easy to sing I really love this song because have playful rhythm and make you enjoy to listen it not only that, but also taught how to ask for opinions and with confidence |

Morphological omission occured when the students did not use the correct form of word such as no 's' ending for plural noun as in the first example in the table, or in a verb after a third singular person subject as in the second example. Other morphological omissions were related to missing letter which led to incorrect spelling such as in the third example where 'soothing' is spelled 'sooting', and 'especially' is spelled 'specially'.

The fifth example in the table showed both morphological omission and syntactical omission, in which the correct sentence should be "This is the music that comforts me". In a complex sentence which has a relative pronoun, the syntactical error was committed as the students did not use the correct form of verb which should agree with a singular subject.

Another syntactical omission beside the missing article as in the above example is the missing verb 'be' before an adjective and in a passive construction which is part of a complex sentence. In the table, the sentence 'Rock music is a broad genre of popular music that originated as "rock and roll" in the United States' should be 'Rock music is a broad genre of popular music  that is originated as "rock and roll" in the United States, and 'popular music that can easily accepted in all circles' should be 'popular music that can easily be accepted in all circles'.

Other syntactical omissions occurred because the sentences written by the students did not have a subject particularly after a connector in a compound sentence. In the table, the last three sample sentences were missing the subject 'it' after the connector 'because' and 'but'. When the subject 'it' is inserted, the verb that follows will agree accordingly and become 'is easy' and 'makes'.

**Addition**

In contrast to omission, addition is the category of error in which unnecessary forms or words are added to the sentence construction. In this study, there were 9 errors identified as morphological addition and 27 errors as syntactical addition. The examples of errors can be seen in the following table.

**Table 3. Some Examples of Addition Error**

| Error category | Error identification |
|---|---|
| Morphological addition | The first <u>types</u> is pop music<br>I love listen to <u>musics</u><br><u>Everybodies</u> love music<br>I really like music with <u>gendre</u> pop<br>The song can <u>makes</u> me feel comfortable<br>we will <u>reciting</u> al-quran<br>we can <u>called</u> |
| Syntactical addition | the last is sports, <u>plus</u> like volleyball, soccer, futsal, etc<br>for <u>the</u> example is Something Just Like This<br>there are so many organizations on <u>the</u> UIN Antasari Banjarmasin campus<br>Jazz music uses many <u>of</u> instruments<br>my favorite songs are <u>like</u> hip hop and rap genre<br>It is stand for Electronic dance Music<br>when I'<u>m</u> feel lonely<br>classic music <u>is</u> always make me amazed and calm |

In the above samples, the most obvious error in morphological addition is when the students added unnecessary suffix 's', 'ed', or 'ing' to a verb where actually the verb should have its base form if it is placed after a modal. In the case of noun, it is found that the students added 's' and 'es' as though the nouns were plural. Meanwhile, the addition of a letter in 'gendre' shows a mispelling of a word.

In syntactical addition, the errors were identified when there was unnecessary word used, like 'plus' in the sentence "the last is sports, <u>plus</u> like volleyball, soccer, futsal, etc"

Syntactical addition is also identified when the students used article 'the' improperly before a name of an institution and between 'for example'. Next, errors in syntax tended to occur when learners added unnecessary preposition and used verb 'be' mistakenly when there is already a finite verb such as in the sentence "when I'<u>m</u> feel lonely" and "classic music <u>is</u> always make me amazed and calm".

## Selection

Among all categories, selection is the most frequent errors commited by EFL learners in their writing. In the samples of their composition, the highest number of errors was found in lexical selection or word choice with 47 errors. Furthermore, there were 17 errors which can be categorized as syntactical selection, and only 4 errors were found in morphological selection. The following table presents the examples of errors in selection.

**Table 4. Some Examples of Selection Error**

| Error category | Error identification |
|---|---|
| Morphological selection | The last and the <u>lovest</u> song is from "Maroon 5" with the tittle "memories"<br>Besides being modern, pop music types are also <u>more easy</u> listening for all groups<br><u>it</u> beats is also fun<br>doesn't like to hang out and also <u>talkless</u> |
| Lexical selection | In <u>material</u> arts, several movements are offered such as hitting, kicking, and <u>parrying</u><br>We have a lot of songs and we categorize them <u>according to</u> three countries that we like<br>we thought the songs from |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | England were cool and this also <u>concerns</u> our major | | a friend whose models are usually used to be a family "asks" about us |
| | This organization is mostly <u>interested</u> by students majoring in language or students who like to be creative in writing | | |

The errors in morphological selection presented in the table indicated that learners used the form of comparative adjective incorrectly. 'The lovest song' should be 'the most loved song', and 'more easy' should be 'easier'.

In lexical selection, learners applied the wrong word choice which led to misunderstanding of the meaning of the sentence. In the first example, the word 'material' is misspelled. In the context of the sentence, it should be 'martial'. The possibility is the learners confused the spelling with how the word sounds.

Errors in lexical selection were also found when learners chose the wrong word to express certain meaning. For instance, in the sentence "This organization is mostly *interested* by students majoring in language", the student failed to find the correct word 'favored' to express the intended meaning, and used 'interested' instead.

Other lexical selection errors occurred because certain words were literally translated from learners' first language such as 'channel' for '*menyalurkan*', ' brake' for '*rem*' or '*mengerem*', 'merciful' for '*penyayang*', and 'adult' for '*dewasa*'. These words are meaningful in Bahasa, but in English they are inappropriate and might cause confusion to native speakers. The word 'eyelid' even has no clear meaning and can be considered as global error [32].

The continuation of the left column table:

let's <u>organize</u> in accordance with the fields that interest you

It can be a matter of <u>association</u>, lessons, or even romance

as a place to <u>channel</u> hobbies

you will also learn to <u>appear confidently</u> in front of many people

the first <u>eyelid</u> is an organization engaged in linguistics and debate

<u>Coupled</u> with listening to favorite music, will make me more calm.

We also need <u>brake</u> from things that are not true. The <u>brake</u> is a religion

I have many friends who have different characteristics. The first type is <u>merciful.</u> The second type <u>adult</u>, her name is Husnul

| Syntactical selection | there have many divisions such as basketball, football, badminton and others |
|---|---|
| | because sports organization activities are not just training and exercising every week but also at the same time can make achievements |
| | We usually interact from the commented on Instagram |
| | you know how easy to be heard jazz music |

## Misordering

Misordering is the least category of errors commited by the students in their composition. Only 4 errors were identified respectively in lexical misordering and

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[32] Erdogan.

syntactical misordering, and none was found in morphological misordering.

**Table 5. Some examples of Misordering**

| Error category | Error identification |
|---|---|
| Lexical misordering | group band acoustic<br>the title song<br>studio music<br>music pop |
| Syntactical misordering | many things I can get from a variety of activities<br>here a lot of religious knowledge that I can get<br>In this organization is prioritiezed family<br><br>there are three types of music that is my favorite |

**Table 6. Errors Identified in Students' Composition**

| Category of errors | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Omission:<br>- morphological<br>- syntactical | <br>25<br>28 | <br>15.54 %<br>17.39 % |
| Addition<br>- morphological<br>- syntactical | <br>9<br>27 | <br>5.59 %<br>16.78 % |
| Selection:<br>- morphological<br>- lexical<br>- syntactical | <br>4<br>43<br>17 | <br>2.48 %<br>26.70 %<br>10.56 % |
| Misordering:<br>- morphological<br>- lexical<br>- syntactical | <br>-<br>4<br>4 | <br><br>2.48 %<br>2.48 % |
| Total | 161 | 100 % |

In the sample of lexical meisordering, the correct form of 'group band accoustic' is 'accoustic group band', 'the title song' should be 'the song title', 'studio music' should be 'music studio', and 'music pop should be 'pop music.

Syntactical misordering showed that students confused the position of subject, predicate, and object in a sentence. For instance, in the sentence "many things I can get from a variety of activities" the correct order is "I can get many things from a variety of activities". In the case of the sentence "in this organization is prioritized family", the correct order is "family is prioritized in this organization". The less number occurrence of misordering implied that the participants of this study have acquired the rules of word order at a considerable level.

Overall, selection is the highest occurrence of errors, while misordering was the lowest occurence. The following tables summarizes the number of errors found in students' composition:

Departing from this finding, the next section attempts to discuss the errors from interlingual and intralingual perspectives.

**Interlingual Errors**

As described in literature review, interlingual errors are caused by L1 interference. Findings of this study revealed that interlingual errors are related to selection and misordering, both in lexical and syntactical areas. Lexical selection appears to be highly affected by the first language. The students might either lack of vocabulary repertoire or have no knowledge of the correct choice of words to use.

Several examples of errors on lexical selection have been highlighted in the previous section. Other example is the expression 'coupled with', which is inapropriate, because if the intended meaning is actually *'ditemani'*, the correct word should be 'accompanied by'. Similarly, in the sentence "we thought the songs from England were cool and this also

concerns our major", it seems that the student was trying to state that English songs can help him in studying English, but the use of the word 'concerns' made the sentence meaningless, if not confusing. L1 interference is obvious in lexical selection as in their composition, the students applied words which are commonly used in their mother tongue but uncommon in English.

In the case of syntactical selection, L1 interference caused the learners produce ungrammatical sentences. Syntactical selection samples presented in table 4 proved that students have difficulty in constructing grammatically correct sentences. The errors ranged from local error [33] such as in "We usually interact from the commented on Instagram" to global error as in "a friend whose models are usually used to be a family asks about us". In the former example, the reader could easily figure out that the erroneous form of *commented* should be *comments*; whereas in the latter example, the syntactical selection hindered the intended meaning and created confusion to the reader.

The other interlingual interference is errors caused by lexical misordering. In English the position of modifier such as adjective is placed before the noun head, while in learners' L1 (Indonesian), it is the other way around. Furthermore, in sentence pattern, English mostly follows the order of S-V-O, while the order of sentence elements in Indonesian can be changed without the changing in meaning As a result, it is often found that students put the object of the sentence is put at the beginning, such as in "many things I can get" and "here a lot of religious knowledge that I can get".

In comparison with the findings of a study of undergraduate students in Pakistan,

one of the sources of learners' writing errors was also in the habit of relying on their first language during processing thought, in which the students were thinking in Urdu while producing writing in English [34].

## Intralingual Errors

In contrast to interlingual error which originates from L1 interference, the source of intralingual errors lies in the target language itself. In the process of acquisition, L2 learners either have insufficient command of language structures or false interpretation of distinctions in some grammatical rules [35][36]. In other words, learners are still in the developmental stage of acquiring L2.

In this study, interlingual errors were found in omission and addition. It can be argued that omission might result from learners' simplification and lack of knowledge of correct language forms, whereas addition resulted from overgeneralization of rules. When learners omitted particular morpheme or suffix in word formation, they were either simplifying or ignoring the rules such as in the word formations "three genre" and "several week ago", or in the sentence constructions "it is old music" and 'they more than friend for me". However, this error might also be caused by interlingual factors, as in learners' L1 the form of plural by adding 's' or 'es' at the end of a noun, as well as 'to be', does not exist.

Omission error also occurred as the article was left out in the sentence construction. In English norms, a non-definite singular noun should either use article 'a' or 'an', while a definite noun should use article 'the'. This rule does not apply to Indonesian language system, thus Indonesian EFL learners frequently made error in their writing. In the

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[33] Erdogan.

[34] Fareed, Ashraf, and Bilal.

[35] (Al-Khresheh, 2016

[36] ; Fareed et al., 2016)

case of article omission, some researchers (Bautista & Gonzales, 2008, and Wijaya, 2012 in [37] have pointed that this type of error resulted from L1 interference, thus should be categorized as interlingual.

In the case of addition, when learners added morpheme or suffix to a word that actually did not need it, they were making overgeneralization of rules such as in "It is stand for Electronic Dance Music"; "she is always makes me amazed" and "his mother is American people". Overgeneralization could be related to redundancy, where the learners failed to produce effective sentences.

Interestingly, morphological selection also occurred as a result of overgeneralization. In the word 'talkless', learner attempted to express a character of a person who did not like to talk by adding suffix 'less' which is generally used to indicate negative meaning. Unfortunately, the rule was applied incorrectly as this type of word formation has never existed in standard English.

In addition to L1 interference, the errors in the composition were likely to occur since students did not execute post writing stage, that is, editing and revising, prior to submitting their task. Considering the fact that students were asked to write in their computer, there should be plenty of opportunity to correct their errors, particularly the mechanics such as spelling and word form. However, the result of their composition which still contained errors in spelling indicated that students might not have an awareness toward errors or not realize the importance of checking their work after they finished their writing.

In this study, intralingual errors which can be identified from omission and addition were less than interlingual errors. This implies that the negative transfer of L1 has influenced the language production more than the mastery

of L2 rules. In addition, since the research participants were already in the intermerdiate level of language proficiency, they could be considered as having already been equipped with quite sufficient knowledge of language rules. As Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982 [38] stated, omission is typically commited by learners in the early stages of L2 acquisition, while in the later stage, EFL learners are more cognitively mature.

## Conclusion

The findings of this research revealed that interlingual errors were more frequent than intralingual ones in compositions written by EFL learners. Based on the number of errors commited in morphological, lexical and syntactical aspect, it was evident that EFL learners still had difficulty in forming the word based on L2 norms, selecting the correct form of words, and in constructing grammatically correct sentences. L1 interference was primarily the cause of this phenomenon. Given the fact that the research participants are Indonesian students whose first language structure is different from English, a number of words selected and constructed by the students to express their ideas had clearly been affected by the first language and inappropriate translation.

Several implications can be drawn from the results of this study. Firstly, in the process of acquiring second language skills especially writing, error is unavoidable. Writing is a productive skill which requires accuracy and fluency, and therefore should be continuously sharpened through rigorous practice

Secondly, although the errors commited can be categorized as local errors, in which the sentences to some extent are still comprehensible, errors still need to be corrected in order to prevent it from being

[37] Prihantoro, 2016)

[38] in Al-Khresheh, 2016)

fossilized. In this case, corrective feedback from the teacher plays an important role.

Finally, both EFL learners and teacher should be more active in finding exposure to the correct form of the target language so that learners could produce a better writing piece. Adopting suggestions from [39], reading activity should be promoted since it will enrich vocabulary. Moreover, teachers should emphasize the conscious teaching of vocabulary and find effective way to help learners acquire the language items.

For future research, it is suggested that a longitudinal study on EFL learners' composition be conducted involving a mixed method by examining learners' writing strategies and observing classroom activities to see how they bring impacts to minimize errors, in other words, to maximize language acquisition. A classroom-based action research where certain treatment is administered might also be beneficial to improve learners' writing skills and reduce errors.

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³⁹ Fareed et al., 2016)

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